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Hammerstrom encourages colleagues to wear red *Senator works to raise awareness of heart disease*

LANSING – In support of National “Go Red For Women” Day, members of the Michigan State Senate will join millions of Americans this week when they wear red to show their support for heart disease awareness, announced Sen. Beverly Hammerstrom, R-Temperance.

Go Red For Women is the American Heart Association’s national movement to raise awareness of heart disease among women. According to statistics, cardiovascular disease, which includes heart disease, on average kills approximately one woman every minute in the United States.

“Heart disease takes the lives of more sisters, mothers, aunts, grandmothers and wives than the next six leading causes of death, including all cancers,” Hammerstrom said. “Educating women about these dangers and the benefits of taking charge of their health will help us reduce the number of deaths associated with this disease.”

Women face six major risk factors for heart disease that can be prevented, controlled or treated with diet, exercise and sometimes prescribed medications. The risk factors include high blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes. Smoking, being overweight, and not getting enough physical exercise are also risk factors.

“Heart disease can most often be prevented by living a healthy lifestyle,” Hammerstrom said. “By discussing the risk factors with a doctor and maintaining a heart-healthy lifestyle, women can significantly lower their chance of developing heart disease.”

According to the Michigan Department of Community Health, nine out of 10 Michigan adults have one or more of the major risk factors. Cardiovascular disease, including heart disease, will cost Michigan approximately \$14 billion this year.

Funding for cardiovascular disease prevention programs comes from the Healthy Michigan Fund. Created in 1996, the fund uses tobacco-tax generated revenue to improve the health of Michigan residents while addressing the needs of vulnerable populations.

National Go Red For Women Day is Friday, Feb. 3. Senate members wore red today to demonstrate their support for the movement.

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“My colleagues and I are wearing red today to show our commitment to keep Michigan healthy,” Hammerstrom said.

For more information about heart disease, including current statistics and links to organizations such as the American Heart Association, please visit Hammerstrom’s website at: www.senate.michigan.gov/hammerstrom.

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Editor’s note: A photo of Sen. Hammerstrom encouraging her colleagues to “Go Red For Women” is available on the Web at:

<http://www.senate.michigan.gov/photowire/Hammerstrom/Hammerstrom.htm>